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RUEHKE/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY 0020  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 001116

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [UG](#) [SU](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: GOSS CONTACTS WITH THE LORD,S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA)

REF: A. KHARTOUM 00989

1B. KHARTOUM 00900 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: CGJ Robert Whitehead, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: UNMIS, UNHCR, and Ugandan consulate officials, among others, have confirmed at least two meetings between GoSS Vice President Riek Machar and Vincent Otti of the LRA. In April, Machar reportedly offered to mediate peace talks with Kampala, an offer that Otti did not refuse. A follow up meeting in early May yielded an LRA pledge to talk and to cease attacks on civilians in Sudan if the GoSS agreed to provide food to the LRA. GoSS President Kiir will brief Museveni on these contacts during his May 12 visit to Kampala for Museveni,s inauguration, and report back to the LRA on Museveni,s response. The Ugandans claim that most LRA forces have withdrawn and regrouped in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and that two unidentified Europeans were present during the second Machar-Otti meeting. End summary.

12. (C) Following conversations with UNMIS and UNHCR, CG contacted the Ugandan Consulate to ask what they knew about reports of meetings between VP Machar and the LRA,s Otti. The consular officials stated that there had been two known meetings. Machar first met Otti in Mabangu (coordinates unknown) in Western Equatoria on April 11. According to the GoSS readout, Machar had made the following points: a) the LRA must be ready to talk peace; b) if it will not, the LRA must leave Sudan and return to Uganda; and c) if the LRA continues attacks on Sudanese soil, the SPLA will force it out. Otti reportedly replied that the LRA is ready to talk but that he did not believe the GOU would agree.

13. (C) On May 5, a larger meeting occurred five kilometers from the site of the earlier meeting. This included LRA Chief Joseph Kony, Otti, and a brigadier on the LRA; and Machar, Interior Minister Daniel Awet, SPLA General Mathok, and two unidentified Europeans ) believed to be British or American ) for the GoSS. The Ugandans said that the LRA had named a negotiating team to meet with the GoSS (thus far they have usually failed to show for meetings) and said they were ready to negotiate with the GOU in either Nairobi or Juba, but not inside Uganda. The LRA said that they had mounted attacks against Sudanese civilians because of hunger. The Ugandans said that the GoSS had agreed to supply the LRA with three truckloads of food near Maridi, ostensibly the quid pro quo for ceasing attacks on Sudanese civilians.

14. (C) The next step will reportedly be Kiir,s debrief of Museveni in Kampala on May 12. The Ugandan diplomats said that they were as yet unaware of what the GOU reaction might be, but that Kiir would relay this response to the LRA. In the meantime, some of the Ugandan Popular Defense Force troops deployed in Sudan have moved nearer the Congolese

border. The Ugandans claimed that Kony fled his refuge in Lafon some months past, possibly with SAF complicity, and moved to Mangalla, on the Nile River, and then across the river and southward to DRC. Kampala believes that only remnants of the LRA remain east of the river, although there is a confirmed force of less than 100 men led by a Commander Odiambo, also under indictment in The Hague, that two days ago crossed the main road to Yei approximately 34 miles west of Juba. The destination of this force is unknown. The Ugandans have no firm figure for present LRA strength in DRC.

¶5. (C) Comment: Machar has agreed to meet CG on May 12, if this schedule holds, and we will try to get more details on where things stand. We will impress upon Machar the delicacy of dealing with the LRA, including the reported provision of food aid, given the LRA's official designation as a terrorist organization and the indictment of its senior leadership by the International Criminal Court. To date, this message has not had a marked impact on the GoSS.

¶6. (C) Comment continued: The identity of the two purported English/American participants in the Machar meetings remains unclear. We note for the record that two former UK Special Forces Officers who now work for the independent security consulting firm Halliday Finch sought out the CG in mid-April and informed CG that LRA representatives had passed the previous weekend in the RA International Camp in Juba.  
HUME